

Message Text

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S E C R E T BANGKOK 4247

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS-1981

TAGS: MASS, TH

SUBJECT: THAI REQUEST FOR HIGHER AID LEVEL

REF: A. STATE 035871

B. BANGKOK 1960

C. BANGKOK 3 578

D. BANGKOK 3986

1. MEMORANDUM REF A REPRESENTS SHOPPING LIST DEVELOPED BY HAST-ILY- CONSTITUTED COMMITTEE OF SENIOR THAI MILITARY OFFICERS IN CONNECTION WITH VICE PRESIDENT' S VISIT AND GIVEN TO GENERAL DUNN (REPORTED REF B PARA 3). SINCE THEN THAIS HAVE GIVEN UP- DATED VERSION OF MEMORANDUM TO COMUSMACHTAI FOR TRANSMISSION TO GENERAL DUNN (COPY POUCHED EA/ TB MAR 2). THEY DID THIS DESPITE OUR AND GENERAL DUNN' S EFFORTS DISSUADE THEM FROM BROAD SHOPPING LIST APPROACH. PAPER ITSELF WAS NOT DISCUSSED WITH ANY MISSION ELEMENT HERE. ON BASIS OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH AMBASSADOR ANAND, WE CERTAIN HE REALIZES LACK OF REALISM IN PRESENTING US WITH AN AMBITIOUS AND ALL- ENCOMPASSING ASSISTANCE REQUEST LIKE THIS. HOWEVER, RTG MILITARY LEADERSHIP EVIDENTLY WANTED TO ASSURE THAT THEIR MEMORANDUM BE GIVEN SOMEWHAT MORE ELEVATED STATUS THAN INFORMAL PAPER GIVEN TO DUNN AND HENCE INSTRUCTED DELIVERY IN WASHINGTON.

2. SINCE SHOPPING LIST REFLECTS BROAD EQUIPMENT DESIRES OF SENIOR SERVICE STAFFS, THAIS WILL CONTINUE TO RAISE IT IN OUR MILITARY
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ASSISTANCE DIALOGUE. FOR INSTANCE, AT COMUSMACHTAI'S FEBRUARY 27 MEETING WITH RTA STAFF ON REDUCED MAP FY73 (REF C) RTA C/ S GENERAL SURAKIJ ASKED WHAT EFFECT, IF ANY, FY73 REDUCTIONS HAD ON RTG REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE PRESENTED DURING MOST RECENT VICE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT. COMUSMACHTAI REPLIED THAT LIST PROVIDED TO GENERAL DUNN WAS SEPARATE FROM NORMAL MAP ACTION AND NOTED THAT HE PERSONALLY WAS NOT INVOLVED IN THE GENERAL DUNN DISCUSSIONS.

3. SUGGEST DEPARTMENT TREAT PAPER AS WHAT IT SAYS IT IS, I. E., GUIDANCE (PRESUMABLY TO INTERNAL NATURE) FOR DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION OF THINKING ON THE PART OF THE SERVICES, RATHER THAN A FORMAL REQUEST FOR SPECIFIC ASSISTANCE ITEMS; HENCE INFORMAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT SHOULD SUFFICE. MIGHT MAKE ADDITIONAL POINT THAT MANY ITEMS IN SUBJECT SHOPPING LIST ALREADY APPEAR IN MAP PLANS OR IN SHORTFALL LISTS BASED ON MAP PLANNING. REGARDING THESE ITEMS, SUBJECT MEMORANDUM ENVISAGES ACCELERATED DELIVERY. THERE ARE ALSO NEW ITEMS ON LIST. THESE AND ALL OTHER MATTERS PERTAINING TO LIST CAN BE TAKEN UP WITHIN REGULAR MAP PLANNING PROCESS IN BANGKOK (AS SUGGESTED REF A). IN FACT, MISSION HAS BEEN DISCUSSING WITH RTG MATERIEL REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATED THAI NATIONAL CI PROGRAM AS PART OF DIALOGUE REPORTED IN BANGKOK 1298.

4. WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING FURTHER RE POSSIBLE THAI MISSION TO WASHINGTON. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT RTG MAY NOT PRESS ON THAT, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING, AND AWAIT MEANWHILE AWAITING RESULTS OF MANY HIGH- LEVEL APPROACHES THEY HAVE RECENTLY MADE FOR RESTORATION OF AID CUTS. PRIME MINISTER INDICATED THIS MUCH TO CINCPAC. IF IDEA IS REVIVED, WE WILL SEEK TO DISCREETLY DISCOURAGE IT AND BELIEVE WE WILL HAVE ALLY IN AMBASSADOR ANAND. THE LESS SAID ABOUT THIS SUBJECT THE BETTER.

5. OUR RECOMMENDATION THAT WE LOW- KEY THAI SHOPPING LIST AND ATTEMPT TO PITCH IT BACK TO BANGKOK DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE CAN DISREGARD THE PROFOUND DISTRESS OVER ASSISTANCE LEVEL THAT IS BEHIND PREPARATIONS OF THIS LIST. KEY THAI LEADERS ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT MILITARY AS WELL AS ECONOMIC AID LEVELS AND SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS FOR THEIR SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

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